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Notes from the Salmon Field Office of NOAA Fisheries (National Marine Fisheries Service)

What is the mission of NOAA Fisheries?

The NOAA Fisheries strategic plan contains three goals:

- ◊ Rebuild and maintain sustainable fisheries
- ◊ Promote the recovery of protected species
- ◊ Protect and maintain the health of coastal marine habitats



Lemhi River and the L3/L3A Diversions

Two push-up irrigation diversions on the lower Lemhi River (L3 and L3A) were identified several years ago by the Bureau of Reclamation and local fisheries biologists as barriers to migrating fish during low water periods. Annual maintenance was contributing sediment in the river and disturbance of the stream bed. A project was developed to replace the push-up berms with permanent rock weirs, lined with an impermeable membrane and a notch to allow fish passage at low flows. Beginning the last week of

“This project will result in significant benefits for both the fish and the locals who depend on irrigation from these ditches. We’re excited to be a part of this project”

September, bypass channels were excavated and the Lemhi River was diverted around the construction sites. Janna Brimmer, NOAA Fisheries biologist, has worked closely with Doug Westfall, the pro-

ject contractor, to address fish concerns during the construction. “This project will result in significant benefits for both the fish and the locals who depend on irrigation from these ditches. We’re excited to be a part of this project”



The bed of the Lemhi River below the existing L3 diversion (center) after dewatering

The Indian Creek Prescribed Burn

In the summer of 2001, staff from the Salmon Field Office (SFO) participated in a field review of the Indian Creek prescribed burn. The tour was led by USFS personnel: Doug Baker, Fire Management Officer (FMO) for the Middle Fork Ranger District, and Lynn Bennett, Fire Ecologist for the Salmon/Cobalt Ranger District. The focus of the review was to evaluate the effects of the 2000 Clear Creek Fire.

The Indian Creek prescribed burn was implemented in 1999. When the Clear Creek Fire of 2000 roared through the area, the prescribed burn area fared very well while land immediately adjacent to it experienced a stand clearing fire. This review illustrated the success a prescribed burn can have in suppressing the development of catastrophic fires.



From left to right, Debbie Artimez (NOAA Fisheries), Doug Baker (USFS), Jan Pisano (NOAA Fisheries), and Jim Huinker (NOAA Fisheries)

Bear Track Mine Field Visit

On October 9, Salmon and Challis National Forest minerals specialist, district biologist, and Salmon Field Office personnel visited the Bear Track Mine site observing and discussing ongoing reclamation activities.

NOAA Fisheries personnel were pleased with Meridian Gold's reclamation activities, observing implementation of environmentally protective measures beyond requirements.



From left to right, Jim Huinker (NOAA Fisheries), Ray Henderson (USFS), Adam Whitman (Meridian Gold), and Richard Larson (USFS)

Community Involvement



Hyde Pond

Last winter personnel from the Salmon Field Office participated in the annual kid's ice fishing derby on Hyde Pond. They also participated in the summer event at Kid's Creek Park. Staff have also been involved in other community events such as the Challis Envirothon, stream restoration on the North Fork of the Salmon River, and the Brooklyn Middle School Science Fair.



Registration for the Ice Fishing Derby

Kitchen Creek Blow-Out

A thunder cell passed over the Salmon and Challis National Forest on Friday afternoon July 19, creating heavy localized rainfall in several locations. The rain caused mud and debris to be carried into the Middle Fork and Main Salmon Rivers creating hazards, new obstacles and even a new set of rapids for boaters.

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) is concerned the road at the Kitchen

Creek Slide could wash out during high water next spring. Salmon Field Office (SFO) personnel are working cooperatively with the USFS to look at preventative measures. Several alternatives were discussed on a September 25 field review, and the USFS is considering options. SFO staff will continue to work closely with USFS personnel to ensure needed work can be implemented expeditiously.



Kitchen Creek Slide

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We're on the web

<http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/>

Interagency Implementation Team (IIT) Field Review

Salmon Field Office personnel participated in a three-day field review of the Morgan Creek Grazing Allotment near Challis, Idaho. The focus of the review was to assess effectiveness of monitoring. Key monitoring sites along Blue Creek and West Fork of Morgan Creek were visited. Local issues were discussed regarding integration of agency monitoring protocols within the IIT monitoring program.



West Fork of Morgan Creek